The history of the

75th Anniversary

Sue Marchant

Introduction

As we prepare to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the South Eastern Road Club, we must first turn our minds back to the heady days of November 1924 when Tom Cannon and several cycling-mad friends formed the Club to engage in competitive cycling. Within the first two years, membership had risen to 125! Club events were soon organised over all distances, including 12 hours, and were well supported by club members. As there was obviously a demand, the 1928 events schedule also included a paperchase. With that sort of attitude, it is no wonder that the Club continued and prospered through the economic depression of the late 1920s and the war-shadowed years of the 30s and 40s.

The 1950s proved an extremely prolific period for the club, with high membership and an extensive schedule of competition. Club records were improved several times each season, the 50 miles time changed as many as five times in a single year! In 1952, R. H. Gravenor became the first club rider to complete 25 miles in less than one hour. Also in 1952, Bill Pink recorded 243 miles 1104 yards in a 12 hour event, making it the first ride at more than 20mph average speed.
Club riders also did well in national competitions, the most famous of that period being Mrs J E Brooker. In 1950 she broke the National 25 miles record, finishing in 1.04.10. She was 4th in the British Best All Rounder Competition and won as many as 10 events in one season.

The 1960s were a time of consolidation in the Club and in British Cycling in general, following the formation of the BCF in 1959. The late 50s and early 60s saw a change in the pattern of Club events. The Ladies' events, Open 12 Hour and eventually the Open 100 mile competitions were

dropped for lack of support, while Open promotions in road racing increased. In 1962, Bill Pink tried his hand at promoting a Team Time Trial event - and continued this for many years to come. Track racing also became popular during the mid 1960s and in 1964 the Club obtained its own cabin at Herne Hill Track. Club competitions and the chase for Club records continued, with Bob Donington dominating the Club Championships in the later years and nearly all Club records being repeatedly broken.

In the early 1970s, racing activity in the Club really took off, with many Club riders competing and placing in National competitions. In 1971, the Club recorded 30 individual wins and placings and 5 team wins in Open events. Bob Donington, Pete Holland and Pete Abbott won the C.T.C. Best All Rounder Team Competition in 1971. In 1972, Bob Donington was 12th in the National 100 miles and, with R Corby and Pete Abbott, placed 2nd in the team competition. To top the results, he also gained a 7th place in the National 12 Hour Championship.

The Veteran riders of the club were not idle during the period, especially Bill Pink, who set Veteran's course records over 10 and 25 miles during the 1971 Guernsey Easter Festival of Cycling.

The formation of the English School's Cycling Association led to a marked increase in the number of cycling clubs in schools. Many of those interested and talented youngsters joined local cycling clubs and the SERC was particularly fortunate in having some of the most promising ones amongst its members. In 1973 Stephen Mott won the ESCA National Championship, thus becoming the Club's first National Champion. He was also selected to ride with an English Schoolboy team in the International Tour de Junior in Holland and came 3rd overall.

Over the 2nd half of the decade the Club's Junior members continued to do very well, with Tony Russell winning silver medals in the ESCA 500m sprint final and the National under 18 road race.

The early 1980s continued, where the 1970s had left off. Club records continued to fall at a rapid pace, one 25 mile team record only lasting for two weeks before it was improved again. Riders were now travelling regularly to the Guernsey Easter Festival and returning with wins. Richard Hallett gained national coverage when he broke the TT course trike record on the Isle of Man and Steve Marchant confirmed his ability as a hill climber by gaining a silver medal in the 1984 RTTC National Hill Climb Championship.

In its Diamond Jubilee year, the Club was a hive of activity with competitions in all categories and impressive results to show for its member's efforts. Club records were shaved repeatedly and trophies were hotly contested. A thriving community of like-minded individuals, as conceived sixty years previously by Tom Cannon, the South Eastern Road Club was confidently looking forward to the future.

1985

Arctic conditions ruled the beginning of the year. Snow and freezing temperatures badly influenced the attendance of the Annual General Meeting, but at least the agenda was completed in record time. The 60th Annual Dinner and Prize Presentation did not suffer quite so badly and 153 members and guests enjoyed a cheerful evening. During the proceedings, three special awards were made: Pete Abbott received the club's Badge of Honour for his services to the club over a number of years. Fred White was presented with a gold centred medal in recognition of his magnificent coast to coast ride across America during which he celebrated his 70th birthday. 'Chater' Willis presented Steve Marchant with a special gold medal for the first club rider to finish in the top three in an Open National Championship.

1985 saw much coming and going amongst the club's membership. Many new members joined the club, but several well-known faces left to pursue other goals. Steve Marchant and Michael Oliver resigned their first claim membership to the club to join the 34th Nomads/C.P. Hart in order to further their road racing careers. Ritchie Hallett joined the De Laune CC to concentrate on his track racing aspirations and Rik Drake returned to his native New Zealand. While sad to see them go everybody nevertheless wished them well.

The harsh conditions persisted well into spring, but racing got underway regardless. The 2-up Team Time Trials benefited from dry but cool weather. In the 22 mile event, A Jones and A James of the Central Sussex CC proved the best of 22 entries. Pete Abbott and Fred Brown finished in 6th place as the best club team. When the 28 mile event started a little later,

it had warmed up and the recorded times were very good. For a long while it looked as if the club team of Rik Drake and Louis Passfield might be tying for the win with D Parris and P Bullock (Farnborough and Camberley CC). But they were beaten into runner-up spot by the pairing of Alan Starsmere and Steve Dennis of the East Grinstead CC.
The F W Evans Memorial 25 had 96 entries, 72 of which actually made it to the finish. Tim Godsell (Worthing Excelsior) emerged the winner with a rapid 56.44. Best placed club rider was Rik Drake in 3rd place followed by Peter Horwood in 6th. Two of the three team prizes (1st and 3rd) also fell to club - so a good morning was had by all.

The club's Surrey League Promotion suffered from more persistent bad weather resulting in a low entry of only 29 riders. The 7 lap race was initially cut to 6 laps and when the rain started to fall in earnest about halfway round, another lap was shed from the total. The sprint finish was won by V Smith (Regent CC) and everybody was happy to have finished the days work.

With heavy rains and gale force winds forecast, nobody looked forward to the Inter-Club 50 on the windy E1 course, but by the time the race started the winds had abated and the course was dry if far from easy. Rik Drake recorded the fastest time with 2.04.58 followed by Louis Passfield (2.08.05), Steve Clinch (2.08.22) and George Hackett (2.09.30). The best of the 'Eagles' was Bob Ambrose in 5th place, so the team event was convincingly won by the SERC.

Open events were still high on everybody's agenda and club riders recorded good finishing positions throughout the year. In the CDCA

Hardriders 26 Ritchie Hallett finished 3rd in 1.09.10 and with 4th placed Adrian Hills and Trike-riding Pete Holland scooped the team prize.
Rik Drake used the time before his return to New Zealand very well. He won the Redmon CC 25, the Addiscombe CC 25 and finished 3rd in the SCCU 25.
Adrian Hills proved a very versatile rider throughout the year, finishing 1st in the TA (Southern region) 30 and the CDCA Moon Trophy 25. He also teamed up with Ritchie Hallett to finish 2nd in the KCA 2-up Team Time Trial and joined Pete Holland on the tandem for 2nd place in the West Kent RC Tandem 10 and a 4th place in the ECRA Tandem 10.
Jack Cutmore won the Hainault RC MM 25 and 2nd claim member Steve Marchant was again runner-up in the RTTC National Hillclimb Competition.

At the end of this year, the silverware was fairly evenly distributed. Rik Drake, even though he had now left for home, still finished 1st in the Short Distance Competition. John Yates was the new Club Champion and Pete Abbott won the Veteran's Best Allrounder Competition. Peter Horwood took home the Clubman's Trophy and Mick Burns collected the Veteran's Trophy.

1986

Arctic conditions were at hand once more to greet the New Year and, as in the year before, the bad weather persisted long into what's commonly considered as spring. Racing was slow to start, but members took the opportunity to try their hand at a different challenge or even go for a bit of 'fame'. Bill Pink was awarded the "Sportsman of the Year" Trophy at the Surrey/Sussex Veteran's Lunch. Mark Francis completed the London Marathon in 3 hours 28 minutes, while Adrian Hills featured as front page and centre spread of BICYCLE ACTION's article on tricycle riders. Don Russell, the pedalling plumber, raised £1600 for the South West District Scouts by competing in his first 12 Hour event.

During the year, the club's membership remained very much in a state of constant flux. John Byrne and Simon Read left the club, as did Nicholas and Ronald Slim who joined the VC Londres. On the plus side, the club welcomed about 30 new or rejoining members.

The 25th edition of the 2-up Team Time Trial was to be Bill Pink's last event as organiser. Rain hampered the proceedings but did not influence the outcome or mar the fun of the event. The 21 mile event was won by Bob Donington and Roy Harvey in 57.26, followed by Fred Brown and John Yates in 58.29. Steve Dennis and Alan Starsmere (East Grinstead CC) repeated their 1985 win in a fine 1.06.21 and took home a new trophy, a shield inscribed with the names of the previous 24 year's winners, donated by Bill Pink. This will be presented every year to the winners of the 28 mile event.

After the shield, it was the turn of the cakes. Bill Pink received one in recognition of his 25 years as organiser of the event. Another was a special

prize for this year's winner of the 21 mile event who had been a winner in previous years - and Bob Donington looked very much forward to eating it. The F W Evans Memorial 25 only attracted 69 entries, well down on the previous year, but saw some high quality rides with 9 riders beating the hour. The winner was Warwick Rowe (Polytechnic CC) in 58.15 with Cliff Dent (34th Nomads) only three seconds behind.
Heavy overnight rain and a dark and dull morning caused the start of the Lou Smith Memorial Veterans 10 to be delayed in the interest of safety. Times were at first very slow but improved as the sun came out and the morning warmed up. Bob Addy, who rode as a professional in the Tour De France in the 1960s, clocked the fastest time with 21.47. Winner on age standard was Les Stafford (Rodney CC) with a plus of 5.02.

For the first time in over fifteen years, the Eagle Road Club won the Inter-Club 50! Their winning team consisted of S Hewins (2nd), Ian Bonner (3rd), Dave Russell (4th) and Dave Farrow (6th), beating Bob Donington (1st), Adrian Hills (5th), George Hackett (7th) and Peter Horwood (8th) by 22 seconds.

Despite the demise of the Greater London Council, the London Youth Games were again held at its customary venue at the Crystal Palace. The Cycling Event of the Games consisted of two 4-up team time trials with the placing of the teams deciding on the final points awarded. The SERC had no contestants in the schoolboy competition, but Simon Read, Tim Walsh, Bryan Porter and Matthew Hitchcock from the club made up the Juniors team. They started well but eventually crashed on the wet surface. With Matthew Hitchcock unable to continue the race, Simon and Tim nursed a bruised Bryan Porter to the finish gaining valuable points in the process. The Games ended with Bromley being the overall winner for the first time

and all members of the Bromley Team being wined and dined at the Civic Centre.

At the end of the season Bob Donington emerged as the new Club Champion and collected the Short Distance Trophy as well. Tim Walsh was Junior Champion. Fred Brown collected the Clubman's and Veteran's Trophies and Peter Abbott finished again as Veteran's Best Allrounder.

1987

The newly elected Club President, Bill Pink, did the honours at the Annual Dinner Dance, which was held for the first time at the Croydon Conservative Club. During the proceedings, outgoing Club President Ann Dumbell was granted Honorary Life Membership of the SERC and Bill Slimmon was presented with a silver salver to commemorate his 50 years as club treasurer.

Following the 'retirement' of Bill Pink as organiser of the 2-up Team Time Trial, Roy Harvey had volunteered his services and found it heavy going with three sets of traffic lights affecting the course. Both events had to be shortened by about 8 miles to avoid them. In the 16 mile event, club riders did very well. Bob Donington and Peter Horwood recorded the fastest time of 36.09. Peter Abbott and Fred Brown were fastest vets on age standard. In the 20 mile event, the club had only one team consisting of Tony Russell and Adrian Hills, who eventually finished 5th. The fastest time was recorded by Peter Hamilton and Ron Keeble of the Wren Wheelers in 44.40.

The F W Evans Memorial 25 was very lucky with the weather. The rain obligingly held off until the last rider had finished before coming down in ribbons and washing all the results off the board. The fastest time was the 57.46 of Tim Godsell (Worthing Excelsior) with Harry Featherstone (Norwood Paragon) in second place. Best placed club rider was Peter Horwood in 6th.

Organiser Chris Halston prefaced his report about the Lou Smith Memorial Veterans 10 with the words: "There is really not very much to say since nothing went wrong!" There was very much that went right, though: 100 entries, a calm pleasant morning, and an excellent photographer who took a lot of trouble getting it right… The main prize winner was Jim Siburn

(Willesden CC) with a plus of 7.25. Fastest on actual time was Paul Bennett (Polytechnic CC) in 22.29.

The habitually abysmal weather cleared just in time for the Inter-Club 50, but heat, high humidity and a finishing leg into a strong breeze affected the riders to make this a thoroughly tough event. Bob Donington repeated his win of last year and, ably supported by Jack Cutmore, Peter Abbott and George Hackett, brought the Inter-Club Trophy back to the SERC after only one year's absence.

Open successes for club riders were mixed and generally over the shorter distances. George Hackett celebrated a win in the Luton Arrow CC MM 25. Jack Cutmore finished 4th in the Eagle RC MM 25 and Peter Horwood finished 6th in the Bec CC 25. Bob Donington recorded a 4th place in the VTTA (Wessex) 25 and a 6th in the Addiscombe CC 25, where the SERC also took the team prize, while John Yates finished 5th in the TA (SE Region) 10, beating Peter Holland into 7th place. Always more at home on his trike, Peter Holland finished 6th in the West Suffolk CC Wheelers 25.

At the end of the season, the silverware changed hands as usual. Justin Marchant won the Junior Championship, Jack Cutmore the Clubman's Trophy and Peter Abbott took home the Veteran's Trophy. All other trophies went to John Yates.

1988

1988 began with unexpected trials and tribulations. First, the club lost its home in Shrublands Community Centre due to a large renovation project. Alternative accommodation for the year was found at the Methodist Church Hall, Beckenham, before the club could return to its extended and much improved customary haunt in November.
Next, the 63rd Annual Dinner and Dance turned into a challenge for the organisational talents of Lesley Donington. After all the arrangements for the Dinner Dance had been completed, the Croydon Conservative Club closed unexpectedly at short notice. Lesley managed to find an alternative venue and an outside caterer willing to take on the job. But the bad luck had not yet run out. A power cut on the evening of the dance delayed the dinner and forced the club members to consume their pre-dinner drinks by romantic candlelight. As it was St Valentine's Day nobody minded much, and once power was restored and dinner served, the rest of the evening passed without incident.

During the year, the club became rather famous for activities other than cycling. Alan Carlisle and Geoff Wood successfully completed the London Marathon collecting money for their sponsored charities, while John Cowley turned up on the box in ‘Come Dancing’ in the Peggy Spencer Formation Dancing Team.

Yet despite all the fame, the racing was not neglected. The 2-up Team Time Trial took place on a bright, sunny morning. Victory in the 22 mile event fell to Roy Mansert and Roy Crayford (San Fairy Ann CC) in 52.45. Roy Harvey and Peter Horwood were third in 56.09. The 28 mile event

was won by Peter Hamilton and Ron Keeble (Wren Wheelers) in a fine 1.05.34. Jim and Alan Bainbridge came home in 7th place in 1.17.07.
The F. W. Evans Memorial Trophy event fell foul of the weather, with a very strong north-easterly wind making it hard for the riders and even causing a crash. Only three riders finished within the hour with Barry Clarke (Surrey Roads CC) clocking 57.53 for a win.
Barry Clarke (Surrey Roads CC) appeared again about a month later, winning the Surrey Road Race League Promotion race, which was encumbered not only by road works and temporary traffic lights, but also by rain during eight of the nine laps.
John Pritchard (Polytechnic CC), current 25 mile champion and the first vet to win the title, was the fastest rider in the Lou Smith Memorial 10 with 21.08. Seventy-one year old George Addy (High Wycombe CC) won on age standard with a plus of 5.64. The Polytechnic CC managed to win both the team prizes for actual and age standard time.

And last but not least, the SERC won the Inter-Club 50 against the Eagle Road Club with an unprecedented margin of 21 minutes! Bob Donington recorded another win in the event with his finishing time of 2.05.41.

Club events produced some new names at the top of the result's table. Junior Justin Marchant won the club's Junior Championship and Junior Trophies over 10, 25 and 50 miles. Matthew Olney, Phil Mitchell and Andrew Reed appeared more frequently in the senior results, although they could not keep Bob Donington's name off the majority of the trophies. The Clubman's and Veterans Trophies were won by Fred Brown, with Matthew Olney placing a respectable second in the Clubman's competition.

1989

At the AGM, Peter Abbott and Lesley Donington became new Vice Presidents of the Club. Roy Harvey took over the post of Events Secretary and Phil Mitchell and Matthew Olney joined the committee.
The Annual Dinner and Prize Presentation was held at the Bromley Civic Centre and was a great success - until the final bill arrived, which bore almost no resemblance to the initial quotes the Club had received. Slim, as Club Treasurer took up matters with the caterers and got the bill dramatically reduced. The remaining shortfall was covered by Club member's generosity and Club Room fundraisers.

Sadly, the Club lost several of its old members during the year: Gordon Wilcock, founder member of the Club and Secretary and Treasurer between 1929 and 1937, died shortly before his 90th birthday. He had brought much enthusiasm to the Club's early years and was awarded the Club's Badge of Honour in 1936.
Godfrey Stone, who joined the club before the war and was a tremendously enthusiastic club member during the 50s and 60s died at the age of 71 after a long illness. He showed great promise as a racing cyclist before being called up and captured by the Germans during the defence of Calais. An injury sustained during his imprisonment put paid to his racing career, but he never lost his love for the sport and acted as Racing Secretary and a time keeper. He was awarded the Club's Badge of Honour in 1955.
George Ballard, one of the oldest club members also died during the year. He had joined the club in 1930 and rode solo and tricycle, as well as tandem with Len Garrard, in club and open events. His move to Pevensey a few years ago did not dampen his enthusiasm for the club or his sport and he will be sadly missed.

This year the 2-up Team Time Trial was held over one distance only to simplify the organisation of the event. Last year's winners Peter Hamilton and Ron Keeble (Wren Wheelers) again emerged victorious just a fraction ahead of A Kay and R Royston (Sydenham Wheelers).
In contrast to the previous year it was a delightful day for the F W Evans Memorial 25. Unfortunately the number of entries had dropped to 71 and of these only 51 finished. Last man off Don Awcock (Central Sussex CC) took the honours with a fine 57.48. In the team competition the Norwood Paragon team of Brian Adams, Peter Dankwart and Ray Runham had nearly 6 minutes to spare over the 2nd placed team.
The hot summer weather then took a break to allow a pleasant morning for the Lou Smith Memorial 10 in which Lou's son-in-law, Bob Donington, recorded the fastest time of 22.07. The main prize however went to 64 year old Don McKellow (Polytechnic CC) who did a splendid 23.24 for a plus of 7.21.

Very hot and humid conditions affected the Inter-Club 50 in which the SERC was soundly beaten by the Eagles. Simon Hewins clocked the fastest time with 1.58.18 - a personal best and a new Eagle RC club record. In 2nd place was Michael Ewer, who had rejoined the club this year, followed by Dave Farrow and George Hackett.

With Bob Doningon having moved to the Polytechnic CC for a change of scenery, the trophies were a bit more evenly distributed this year. Justin Marchant again won the Junior Championship. John Yates won the Club Championship and Michael Ewer became the new Short Distance Champion. Peter Abbott was the new Veteran's Champion and also

collected the Veteran’s Short Distance Trophy. Roy Harvey took home the Veteran's Trophy and the Clubman's Trophy went to Matthew Olney.

The Club Hillclimb Championship took place on Star Hill as usual, but the results fell foul of a freak accident (the timekeeper pressing the wrong button on his clock). So the trophy stayed in its cabinet until the following year.

1990

1990 proved a good year for the club. The club received 15 applications for new membership and, at the end of the year, had 66 full and 17 associate members. Former SERC members, Steve Marchant and Michael Oliver, had spent enough time away from 'home' and rejoined the club. During the AGM, Honorary Life Membership of the club was awarded to Bill Pink for his many years service to the club.

In 1990 the club riders were racing for the first time in the re-designed club colours and there was much racing activity in well supported club and open events. The 2-up Team Time Trial had a field of 64 riders and marked Matthew Olney's debut as event organiser. Except for the rain he made a brilliant job of it and the event was won by ex National Champions Martyn Roach and Bob Garlinge (Hounslow and District Wheelers) in 1.16.24. Michael Ewer and Phil Mitchell were the best club team, finishing in 7th place.
The F W Evans 25 attracted a field of 86 riders and was won by Paul Bull (Gemini BC) in 56.57. Best club rider was Matthew Olney in 7th place.
The Lou Smith Veteran's 10 had 83 entries. The winner on age standard was J Siburn (Willesden CC) with a plus of 7.40. Fastest on actual time was former Tour de France rider Bob Addy in 21.25.

The Club won the Inter-Club 50 against the Eagle RC despite the customary blowy conditions, although we had to grant individual victory to Eagle rider Don Farrow who recorded the fastest time with 2.06.55.
The Club also did very well in open events. Matthew Olney won the Post Office Regional Championship 25 with a fine 1.01.54. Steve Marchant, Michael Oliver and Michael Ewer joined forces to win the team award in

the Crawley Wheelers 42 Mile Hilly Time Trial, while Gary Freeman, Les Humphrey and Dudley Taylor scooped the Team prize in the Rodney CC 10.

Three club records fell to Steve Marchant during the year. He clocked 4.00.50 in the Bath Road Club 100, 1.51.00 in the British Students 50 Mile Time Trial Championship and 52.54 in the Antelope CC 25. He also placed 4th in the Isle of Man Mountain Time Trial recorded good finishing positions during a summer spent road racing in Belgium. Having been selected to ride for Britain in the World Student Games, he returned with a 12th place in the road race and a Bronze medal in the 100km Team Time Trial. To top his season, he then won the Catford and Bec Hill Climbs, the latter with a hill record, and came second, again, in the RTTC National Hill Climb Championship.

All this helped him to win the Club Championship and the Short Distance Championship. Roy Harvey became the Veteran's Champion and Steve Pierce triumphed as Junior Champion. Fred Brown won the Veteran's Short Distance Trophy and the Veteran's Trophy went to D Taylor. Matthew Olney ended the year holding the Clubman's Trophy.

1991

Racing activity in the club was down compared to the previous year, mainly due to bad weather and member's other commitments. However, a campaign by Don Russell and Bill Pink to spread the cycling message to local schools resulted in a number of youngsters joining the club. At the end of the year the club had 72 full, 2 second claim and 10 associate members.

Club events were well supported. Despite snow showers on the previous day, the Open 2-up Team Time Trial took place in sunny, cheerful conditions, ably organised by Matthew Olney's brother David. Steve Marchant and Michael Oliver clocked 1.11.29, beating last year's winners Bob Garlinge and Martyn Roach (Hounslow and District Wheelers) into 2nd place.
The F W Evans 25 attracted a field of 89 riders and was, for the second year running, won by Paul Bull (Gemini BC) in an astonishing 54-41, beating second-placed Paul Ranson (South Western RC) by over 5 min. The Lou Smith veteran's 10 suffered from course mis-directions and results could only count for awards.

The club again won the Inter-Club 50 against the Eagle Road Club, but club successes in open events were scarcer this year. Matthew and David Olney joined forces with Fred Brown to win the Team Prize in the Clarence Wheelers 25. Fred Brown established a Surrey/Sussex Group age standard record by finishing the Leo RC 30 in 1.09.49. The tandem pairing of Chris Slater and Sandy McGlashan achieved a string of good placings and ended their season with a win in the Severnake Velo 10. Clive Willsher took place in the British Les Autres Sports Association National

Games, which consisted of four track and three circuit events. His best result on the day was a 2nd place in the time trial. The pairing of Les Humphrey and Bill Pink was the best veteran team in the 29th Wheelers CC 25. Matthew Olney came fourth in this event and also recorded a 6th place in the East Sussex Hill Climb. Steve Marchant, cutting down on his racing schedule to work on his PhD, still managed some good results in local open events, placing second in the VC Elan Hilly 22, the Catford CC 50 and the Sydenham Wheelers 10 and winning the Catford CC 25.

At the end of the racing season, Matthew Olney emerged as the new Club Champion. Steve Marchant won the Short Distance Championship, with Fred Brown claiming the Veteran's Short Distance Title. Les Humphrey became Veteran's Champion and Steve Pierce won the Junior Championship. The Clubman's Trophy went, again, to Matthew Olney and the Veteran's Trophy found a home with Roy Harvey.

1992

After a comparatively slow year, racing activity in the club was on the up during 1992. So was membership, which stood at 68 full, 1 second claim and 17 associate members at the beginning of the year. The Annual Dinner and Prize Presentation, held at the Eden Park Hotel, was Bill Pink's final duty as the SERC's president, before the office was taken over by his successor, Peter Abbott.

The 2-up TTT took place on a warm and pleasant morning and was won by Steven Elms and Steve Blackmore (East Grinstead CC) in 1-11-54. Adrian and Mike Twitchett were the only club team to finish the event and did so in 1.26.57.
110 riders entered the F W Evans 25 which was won by Keith Reed (Clarence Wheelers CC) in 54-30, beating John Woodburn (Manchester Wheelers) into 2nd place. The club won the team prize in this event with rides from Steve Marchant (4th), Matthew Olney (9th) and Phil Mitchell (14th).
George Addy (High Wycombe CC) won the Lou Smith Memorial 10 on age standard with a plus of 6.26. Fastest on actual time in a field of 85 was Ron Keeble (Express RT) in 21.21. Derek Redgwell, Bill Pink and Fred Brown all posted very good times to allow the club to scoop the team prize.

The club, again, won the Inter-Club 50 against the Eagle Road Club, with Matthew Olney and Phil Mitchell placing 1st and 2nd respectively.
A larger number of club riders participated in open events this year, and achieved very good finishing positions. The tandem team of Chris Slater and Sandy McGlashan won the Eagle RC Tandem 50 and placed 3rd in the Victoria CC Tandem 25. Steve Marchant managed some good rides during

the season, including a new club record over 100 miles with his 3.58.22 in the Hounslow and District Wheelers 100. For this effort Steve was awarded a special gold medal for the first club rider to beat 4 hours over 100 miles. Steve Marchant, Phil Mitchell and Peter Abbot also managed to secure the team award for the club in the Tooting BC Sporting 42.
Matthew Olney won the London Post Office Association 12 and placed in several other open events.
But the best year by far was had by Derek Redgwell. He won the Kent VTTA 10, gained 1st handicap in the London St Christopher 25, 2nd handicap in the VTTA (London) 25, 1st handicap in the ECCA 50, 3rd place in the VTTA (Kent) 30 and 1st handicap in the Basildon CC 25. Fred Brown, Roy Harvey, Bill Pink, Michael Oliver and Mike Twitchett also posted respectable open results.

Steve Marchant ended the year as Club Champion. Derek Redgwell won the Short Distance Championship and the Veteran's Short Distance Trophy. Roy Harvey was Veteran's Champion and Matthew Olney won the Hill Climb and took home the Clubman's Trophy. The Veteran's trophy went to Peter Abbott.

1993

The year was an eventful one that saw new names appear on some of the trophies. Membership fell slightly to 61 full, 3 second claim and 9 associate members, but all club events were well supported with about 15 club riders participating in each event.
At the Annual General Meeting, the club decided to depart in future from the usual Dinner Dance to celebrate the end of the season and hold a Sunday Lunch and Prize Presentation instead.

The club-organised open events took place as usual with the help of club members and their families.
The open 2-up Team Time Trial took place on a revised course this year, avoiding Ewhurst. Steve Dennis and previous year's winner Steve Blackmore (East Grinstead CC) won the event in 1.02.38.
John Woodburn (Antelope RT) won the F W Evans Open 25 in 55.31, beating a full field of competitors. The team prize was won by the Festival RC, with a club team of Matthew Olney, Derek Redgwell and Gary Freeman only 18 seconds behind.
Organiser Phil Mitchell received 98 entries for the Lou Smith Veteran's 10, 12 of which were from non-veteran riders. Loath to send them back, the ever resourceful Phil organised a separate event within the event which was won by Ben Groggin (Woking CC) in 22.04. Winner in the 'Real' event was John Reynolds (Surrey Roads CC) on his trike with a plus of 5.22. Fastest on actual time was John Froud (Festival RC) in 23.15.
With only five club members riding, the club still managed to win the Inter-Club 50 against the Eagle RC, with Matthew Olney and Gary Freeman recording personal bests. The club also accepted the challenge of

the Old Ports CC for an Inter-Club 10 and a Hill Climb, but lost in both events.

Open events proved popular with the club members. Some even managed to fit in some road racing. Matthew Olney, for example, won one of the Surrey League Road Race Promotions.
On the TT front, Derek Redgwell continued in the previous year's good form and won the Farnham CC 10. He also posted good results in several other open events. Chris Slater and Sandy McGlashan won the Eagle RC Tandem 50 for the second year running, but also posted individual times in the Hitchen Nomads MM 25 with Chris Slater 2nd and Sandy McGlashan 6th fastest.
Not satisfied with his road race win, Matthew Olney tried his hand in several open time trial events, his best result being a 2nd place in the Norwood Paragon 50.
Peter Abbott, Derek Redgwell and Bill Pink gained a team win for the club in a Surrey/Sussex 25 by posting fast times.

Matthew Olney won the year's Club Championship. Derek Redgwell collected the Tom Cannon Shield, the Short Distance and the Veterans Short Distance Trophies. Peter Abbott finished the season as Veteran's Champion. Barry Meens was a new name on the Clubman's and Veteran's Trophies. New club member Thomas Eichholtz won the Hill Climb Championship.

1994

The first “lunch-time” Prize Presentation took place at The Manor, Biggin Hill, and proved very successful with a cheerful atmosphere throughout. Speeches were kept to a minimum and it was nice to see all the event winners of the Club Opens and contingents from the Eagle Road club, the Old Portlians and Polytechnic CCs.
On a non-racing note, the Club took an active interest in promoting cycling and attracting new members to the club. The Club’s stand at the Bromley Council Green Fair provided a roller competition and proved popular with the younger visitors, about thirty of them testing it out against the clock. Certificates for all and plaques for the best reminded everybody of the day.

The Club’s open promotions all took place as planned. Bill Pink again promoted the 2-up Team Time Trial and, again, the East Grinstead CC provided the fastest team, this time consisting of previous year’s winner Steve Dennis and Tim Ellis (1.03.17). Phil Mitchell and Matthew Olney were the best Club team in 9th place.
The F W Evans Open 25 was oversubscribed by 37 entries. This was the first time that the Club had to return so many entries, but it is hoped that this type of interest will continue into the future. On race day, the weather was fine and the event proved a good day for both marshals and riders. Pete Hamilton (Wren Wheelers) posted the fastest time with 55.56.
The Lou Smith Memorial 10 attracted 84 entries and was won by Arthur Dwyer (Oval CC) with +5.47. Fastest on actual time was Bob Donington (Polytechnic CC) in 23.03.

Club events were generally well supported, but the club suffered a little from road works on the evening 10 course, which caused one event to be

shortened and another one to be cancelled. With only four riders completing the distance in the Inter-Club 50, the SERC was well and truly beaten by the Eagle RC. Two further Inter-Club events, 10s this time, were held with the Old Ports and wins here were one apiece. However, the Old Ports got one better on us by winning the Inter-Club Hill Climb on Old Polhill.

A number of club members successfully participated in open events and posted high placings. Clive Willsher took part in the 1994 International Paralympic World Championships in Belgium and also the National Federation Games in England where he won two time trials and finished 2nd in a road race, securing the Gold Medal.

After a 2-year break from racing, Steve Marchant won the VC Elan 2 stage event and finished well in several other time trials. He was 2nd in the Birdwell Wheelers and Matlock CC Hill Climbs and ended the season with a 7th place in the National Hill Climb Championship.

Derek Redgewell continued in good form, with high places in a number of events, the best being 2nd places in a Surrey/Sussex Vets 25, the Kent CC 10 and East Anglian Vets 25.

Matthew Olney had a win in the London Post Office Championship 25, two 3rd places in the CDCA Sporting 16.5 Miles and Surrey Roads 25 and several other good finishing positions to show for his efforts during the year.

Peter Abbott was 1st on age standard in the Catford CC 10 and the Addiscombe CC 25, with Fred Brown coming 2nd on age standard in the latter event. Adrian Twitchett was group winner in the Spoco SE 22 mile and Mike Twitchett finished as group winner in the Brighton Excelsior CC 25.

After two years without a Junior Champion, in 1994 the trophy went to Oliver Walker (19.525mph). Matthew Olney was again Club Champion

(24.77mph) and also won the Hill Climb. Steve Marchant won the Tom Cannon Shield and the Short Distance Championship. Peter Abbot again became Veteran's Champion and Derek Redgwell won the Veteran's Short Distance Championship. Phil Mitchell won the Clubman's Trophy and the Veteran's Trophy went to Colin Derrick.

1995

As usual, the year started on a cheerful note with the Prize Presentation Luncheon which was held at The Warren at Coney Hall. The venue, food and service all were excellent and club members and guests had a very enjoyable time before getting down to the 'serious' business of another season's racing.

On a not quite racing note, Roy Harvey had mentioned once too often that he was keen to ride from land's End to John O'Groats and by the end of May had no excuse left. With fifty miles covered, Roy's rear hub seized up and he had to buy a new wheel. Most people would have called it a day there and then, but Roy continued and after twelve days in the saddle reached John O'Groats tired but triumphant.

Club and Open events were well supported during the year. So well in fact that the Evening 10 timekeeper, after sending the last man off, had difficulties getting to the finish in time to welcome the first rider home.

The 2-up Team Time Trial was held in cold and windy conditions, but the winners Peter Main and Phil Watkin (34th Nomads) were unaffected by the weather and charged around in a course record time of 1.01.42. The best Club team consisted of Phil Mitchell and Matt Olney who clocked 1.07.57 to finish in 10th place.

The F W Evans Open 25 received 123 entries by the closing date but due to wet weather suffered from a number of non-starters, as well as a number of non-finishers. In the end, Tim Stevens (Team 2000) clocked the fastest time with 53.53 and the Rother Valley CC took the team prize. A club team consisting of Matthew Olney, Barry Meens and Adrian Twitchett took 2nd place.

The Lou Smith Memorial 10 attracted 112 entries and was won on age standard by Harry Featherstone (Norwood Paragon) with a plus of 7.37. Fastest rider on actual time was Mike Poole (Thames Tradesmen CC) in 20.59.

In the Inter-Club stakes, the SERC was beaten for the 2nd year running by the Eagle RC in the Inter-Club 50, but drew with the Old Ports in the two Inter-Club 10s held during the season. The first Inter-Club 10 was held on the Polhill course on a pleasantly warm evening in June and had 32 starters, 22 of which were from the Club. The SERC took the first three places due to efforts from Matthew Olney, Bob Donington and Thomas Eichholtz. Best of the Old Portlians was Dave Hickman in 4th place. To level the contest, the Old Ports won the next Inter-Club 10 on Hurst Green Course by taking 1st and 4th-9th place, leaving Matthew Olney (2nd) and Bob Donington (3rd) a little bit stranded. The Inter-Club Hill Climb held on Old Polhill also went to the Old Portlians.

Open Event successes were down compared to the previous year. Thomas Eichholtz and Matthew Olney gained several top ten placings in Surrey League road racing events, but most club riders concentrated on time trialling. Phil Mitchell, Matthew Olney, Peter Abbott, Bill Pink, David Smith and Jim Bainbridge all recorded high finishing positions in open events, while Oliver Walker showed future promised by coming first in his class in the Newbury RC 25. Clive Willsher was overall winner of the Disabled Riders 2 Stage Event and 3rd fastest in his class in the Championship of Brittany 60km road race. Derek Redgwell had another successful year, with 1st places on age standard in the Salisbury RC 25 and the Thanet RC 10 being his best results.

Matthew Olney finished the year again as Club Champion and also collected the Tom Cannon Shield, the Palmer Short Distance Trophy, the Clubman's Trophy and the Hill Climb Trophy. Derek Redgwell won the Veteran's Short Distance Championship. The Veteran's Trophy went to Barry Meens, while Rick Redgwell found his name on the Junior Champion's trophy. Peter Abbot was once again Veteran's Champion.

1996

The annual prize presentation luncheon was fated to be held in yet another venue, as event organiser Tony Brown was informed at short notice that The Warren would be closed for renovation. He found alternative accommodation at the Shirley Park Golf Club and the event could proceed as planned.

For all cycling enthusiasts, 1996 was overshadowed by the death of Beryl Burton at age 58. Beryl was found lying next to her bike at a road junction near Harrogate, but her death proved to be due to natural causes.
Everybody will remember her as an outstanding athlete who set records over all distances, but especially 12 Hours.
Closer to home, the club lost one of its old members, Dave Ivey, who died after a short illness. Dave was a successful rider during the 1950s when he broke all the club tricycle records. His 24 Hour ride still stands as a SRRA record, as does the 100 mile tandem trike record he set with partner Peter Wyatt.
Club events took place as planned during the year although some seemed to have been jinxed. The event organisers did brilliant jobs battling against the elements, road works, industrial action and the interference of the 'boys in blue'.
The 2-up Open Team Time Trial had an entry of 26 teams and was won by favourites Colin Roshier and Bob Garlinge (Hounslow and District) in 1.02.17. Matthew Olney and Phil Mitchell posted a time of 1.07.14 to finish 4th.
Organiser Fred Brown was pleased to receive a full entry of 120 plus 3 reserves for the F W Evans Memorial Open 25. Lawrence Martin (San

Fairy Ann CC) won in 57.47, a fine effort considering gale force winds and intermittent showers.

The Lou Smith Memorial 10 proved to be the most exciting event of the season and a severe trial for organiser Mick Burns. Mick received 94 entries for the event, including some of the fastest names in the region. To make sure that none of the event-related correspondence fell victim to a planned postal strike, Mick dispatched all start sheets extra early - only to be told the Sunday before the event that the course was affected by unexpected road closures and could not be used. The RTTC course secretary managed to obtain a new course for the event, but now all course details and start sheets had to be re-arranged in double time with the upcoming postal strike hanging like the sword of Damocles over the poor organiser. There was no time left to organise event headquarters and the club tent had to be commandeered. At least the weather proved helpful and the day was fine and warm. Only 18 of the entered riders failed to start the event and the Veteran's event was won by Harry Featherstone (Norwood Paragon) with a plus of 8.27 and an actual time of 22.03. Will anybody ever complain of an uneventful promotion again?

To make up for the 'Open' trials and tribulations, the Inter-Club 50 was blessed with fine, calm weather (a rare occurrence on the E1). But the jinx had another field day and the event ended with a somewhat controversial result. The winning team was made up of Steve Marchant, Phil Mitchell, Barry Meens and Mike Twitchett who aggregated 8.29.17 to the Eagle's 8.39.03. However, Damien Froy of the Eagle Road Club overshot a turn, because the marshals had been stopped by the police for speeding and arrived late at their post. Damien therefore rode more than the required distance and 'spoilt' his final time - and maybe the outcome of the race?

The Inter-Club 10 on the Polhill course was won by the Club by just a minute over the Old Portlians.

The Club was well represented in Open events during the year. Clive Willsher again competed very successfully in the cycling races of the 6th Federation Games of the British Amputees and Les Autres which consisted of two time trials and a circuit race and was held at Wroughton Airfield near Swindon. Clive's main rival was Irishman David Boyd and, after the time trials, both were separated by just 16 seconds, but Clive managed to catch a faster wheel during the road race and won a gold medal for overall performance.

Steve Marchant improved the club record over 50 miles by clocking a personal best of 1.50.08 in the SW London Combine 50, placed 2nd in the Oldham Century RC Mountain 20, 4th in the Oxford University CC 10 and 3rd in the Chippenham and District Wheelers 10.

In the Newbury RC 25 Mike Twitchett, Alan Walker and Steve Marchant joined forces to claim the team prize; while Oliver Walker was 2nd fasted Junior in the same event. Adrian Twitchett managed to beat the hour in the Eastern Counties CA 25 and was 1st Junior in the 29th Wheelers CC 25.

Phil Mitchell was second fastest vet in the Vectis Roads CC Hilly 24.

Peter Abbott was 2nd on age standard in the VTTA Championship 100 and 1st on age standard in the Eastbourne Rovers CC 25 before posting Surrey/Sussex Group records over 50 and 100 miles.

At the end of the season Peter Abbott emerged as Club Champion. He also claimed the Veteran's Championship and the veteran's Short Distance Trophy, while Steve Marchant won the Short Distance Trophy and Barry Meens the Clubman's Trophy.

1997

1997 saw the end of term for Club President Peter Abbott, who was followed by Fred Brown. Club Secretary Roy Harvey could not be persuaded to carry on the post for another year and so Tony Brown became the new Club Secretary. Jonathan Baker took over from Tony as Social Secretary.

The Prize Presentation Luncheon at the Shirley Park Golf Club was the usual cheerful affair with several special prizes being awarded. Fred Brown received the Club Badge of Honour for his many years service to the Club as BCF Secretary and Organiser of the Open 25. The Balne Trophy was presented to the organising team of the club's stand at the Bromley Bike Week, where all comers could test their speed and stamina on the rollers.

Club recognition appeared to motivate Jim Bainbridge and his 'roller team' even further. They were spotted at the Penge Fete's 25th Anniversary raising money for the Motor Neurone Research Association and thereby instigating a fierce challenge between the Army (Regulars Canterbury), the RAF (Penge ATC) and the Beckenham Fire Brigade. All of the professionals were beaten by civilian Tunde Ogiden with the RAF contestant taking 2nd place.

It was hoped by all that club events would be well supported, but less exciting than in 1996. One never gets all one wishes for, but the new year started promising enough.

The 2-up Team Time Trial had a surprisingly high entry of 42 teams which included Sean Yates. This was undoubtedly due to the efforts of Steve Clinch who had circulated details of the event amongst the riders of the

East Surrey Hardriders race. True to form Sean Yates (Team Clean/Fresh Start) and his partner Luke Evans (Sydenham Wheelers) put up the fastest time of 58.37, slashing minutes of the course record. Matthew Olney and Thomas Eichholtz, both handicapped by the effects of a cold, were the fastest club pairing in 14th place. The excitement was added by the Brown family , who were half way down to headquarters when it was realised that the numbers had been left at home. The start had to be delayed for an hour, but as the weather improved during this time nobody minded much.
The F W Evans Open 25 had a full field of entries and two reserves, who both managed to get a ride. The new event headquarters at the Buchan County Park proved a good venue and had an extremely helpful Chief Ranger.
Matthew Doe (Sigma Sport) recorded a fine 55.29 for a 1st place. Robert Ward, Keith Reed and Peter Hamilton from the 34th Nomads joined forces to win the team prize.
The Lou Smith Memorial 10 was promoted this year by Peter Wheeler, who received 79 entries for the event on the Crawley to Horsham Road. Harry Featherstone (Norwood Paragon) won the Lou Smith Salver for the third year running. Fastest veteran on actual time was Ron Keeble (34th Nomads) in 21.57. Chris Lord (Brighton Mitre) was fastest overall in 21.48.

There were 14 starters for the Inter-Club 50, seven from each team. The weather was windy as usual, but Steve Marchant still managed a fine 2.00.52 leading Matthew Olney (3rd), Phil Mitchell (6th) and Alan Walker (7th) to a club victory. The excitement in this race was provided by Phil Mitchell, whose seat tube sheared just above the bottom bracket with 10 miles to go, but that did not stop him finishing.

The elation of this win was short-lived, lasting no further than the Inter-Club 10 against the Old Portlians three days later. Although the event was held on the club's 'home ground' of Polhill, the Old Ports took 1st, 3rd, 4th and 6th places and the win and also managed to win the Inter-Club 12 ½ held on a sporting course at Crowhurst.

More success was had in open events. Matthew Olney, Thomas Eichholtz and Phil Mitchell joined forces to win the team award in the Croydon and District CA Sporting 20.

Clive Willsher came 5th in the British Paralympic Games 40km handicap circuit race and won the British Amputee Federation Games handicap circuit race.

Peter Abbott finished 2nd on age standard in the Bec CC 25.

Steve Marchant's aim for the year was the 24 Hour Championship and many miles of preparation paid off as he recorded 467.180 miles breaking Jim Bainbridge's 34-year-old Club Record and placing 4th in an event that saw Andy Wilkinson set a new Competition Record. Having done all the legwork, Steve ended his season with a win in the CC Breckland 12 Hour in 259.794 miles, bagging Bob Donington's 1973 Club Record in the process. By the end of the year, Steve Marchant held all the club's senior solo records, bar 10 miles.

As the season ended, the club sadly lost two of its long-standing members. Harry Parker, a founder member of the club died on 19th November at the age of 97. Also in November, following a sudden heart attack, long time club member Cyril Townsend passed away.

Steve Marchant finished the season as Club Champion and collected the Clubman's Trophy and the Palmer Short Distance Trophy. Peter Abbott won the Veteran's Championship and the Veteran's Short Distance Championship and Clive Willsher took the Veteran's Trophy home.

1998

The number of club members attending the Annual Prize Presentation Luncheon was down on previous years due to the event following rather closely on the over-indulgences of Christmas, but a merry time was had by all who managed to come. Not least because of guest speaker Lesley Donington's witty account of club life in bygone years.
The 1998 AGM had resulted in Slim being without a club job for the first time in 60 years, as he stood down from the post of press secretary. On behalf of all club members, the committee expressed their thanks to Slim for the support he had given the club during his long membership and he was presented with the Blane Trophy for meritorious service to the club.
A little later in the year, Maud and Slim celebrated their diamond wedding anniversary. To mark the occasion their daughters Barbara and Margaret put on a buffet luncheon which was attended by a number of club members. Along with a telegram from HM The Queen, the happy couple was presented with a basked of flowers in the club colours.

One of the problems faced by all sports clubs in the country is how to attract new members and publicise the club's activities. In the last years, the club's rollers were being put to good use, not just for sharpening competitiveness and fighting the flab during the winter months, but also to raise funds for local schools and community projects during the rest of the year. During National Bike Week in June the club's roller stand was stationed in Bromley town centre to promote the fun of cycling.
All this effort attracted attention. Sport's editor Martin Bryce of the Croydon Advertiser wrote an article about Clive Willsher which was published in the paper. He wrote that Clive is "a highly respected rider with one of the area's strongest clubs, the South Eastern Road Club."

The Open 2-up Team Time Trial received a good entry of 30 teams and was won in 1.02.47 by a team from the East Grinstead CC this year consisting of previous winner Steve Dennis and team mate Andy Seltzer. Peter Abbott was riding in this event for the 20th time and with new partner Alan Walker managed his third consecutive win on age standard.
The F W Evans Memorial took place on a breezy morning which provided a good tail wind for the riders on their way home. Tim Stevens (Team Clean) won the race posting a new event record with his finishing time of 52.38.
The Lou Smith Memorial 10 was held on the Crawley course and attracted 96 riders. Michael Hutchinson (Cambridge University CC) recorded an impressive 20.32 for fastest time. In the veteran's event, Harry Featherstone (Eastbourne Rovers CC) won the Lou Smith Salver for the third consecutive year with +8.20 on age standard and 22.40 on actual time.

August proved a very good month for the club with three consecutive wins in Inter-Club events. Our winning margin in the Inter-Club 50 against the Eagle RC was the biggest ever with 68min 24secs. In the Inter-Club 10 against the Old Ports the SERC won with a margin of 8mins, but the 12½ mile was much closer with winning margin of only 49secs.

Open events proved very popular during the year with many riders setting themselves new challenges.
Clive Willsher competed in the British Amputees Association Federation National Games on 23rd and 24th of May. This competition included two time trials and the one hour circuit race on Saturday and 2 time trials and 2 circuit races on Sunday. Clive won the overall silver medal, clocking two 3rds, one 4th, two 5ths and one 6th place. In the European Cup for Disabled

Riders, Clive Willsher was well placed 11th in the hill climb and 7th in the circuit race. To top his season he also collected three silver medals at the Disabled Riders Track Championships at the Manchester Velodrome.
In his first season of racing, David Steer achieved a respectable 349 miles in the National 24 Hour Championship and raised over £4,000 for charity. In the National 12 Hour Championship he recorded a fine 225.23miles, just ahead of second club rider Phil Mitchell who completed 219 miles.
Steve Marchant got close to the club 10 mile record with times of 20.32 and 20.36, but in the end it wasn't quite enough and Michael Oliver's record was safe for another year. Apart from this set back, Steve had a good season with 4 wins and 5 second places in open events - enough to win the WTTA Hardriders Championship.
Among the veterans, Bill Pink slashed over two minutes off the Surrey/ Sussex Group record for 77 year olds by covering 25 miles in 1.1 3.31 and Peter Abbott improved the club record over 10 miles on standard by 20 seconds.

At the end of the season, Matthew Olney was the new Club Champion and won the Clubman's Trophy. The Veteran's Trophy went to Alan Walker. Peter Abbott was again Veteran's Short Distance Champion, while Steve Marchant took home the Palmer Short Distance Trophy.

And finally, the club entered the computer world with Tony Brown creating the club's own Internet Web site. Hopefully this will prove to be a good publicity move for the club with many new people learning about its existence and activities.

1999

1999 was the club's 75th anniversary year and a time to celebrate past achievements and plan an exciting future. Many activities had been planned as part of the 'birthday celebrations'. A special prize was given to the riders placed 75th in the club's open events. Colin Derrick organised the design and production of a commemorative mug, showing the improvements in time trial results since the club's initiation in 1924. And finally club members old and new met in August to take part in a 75km challenge ride and toast the club's past and future during a luncheon. This had been ably organised by Bill Pink, Phil Mitchell and Matthew Olney and the weather played its part too. About 30 club members took part in the "75km Hilly Challenge Ride" and the slightly shorter "Fun Run" through the lanes before congregating at the Three Horseshoes Pub at Knockholt. They were joined there by more club members and friends who enjoyed a lovely lunch in the garden.
Many club members added their own challenges to celebrate the anniversary year. Roy Harvey decided to fulfil his second ambition (the first having been to complete Land's End to John O'Groats) and cycle 2851 miles across Canada. Matthew Olney and Thomas Eichholtz decided to test their strength and stamina by riding a some of the alpine stages of previous year's Tour de France's.

In keeping with the anniversary year, Slim was celebrating his 90th birthday on April 9th with the best wishes from the whole club for many happy returns.

Amongst all those extra-curricular activities, the racing was not forgotten and club events took place as scheduled.

Due to temporary traffic lights at Shamley Green, the course for the Open 2-up Team Time Trial had to be shortened to about 25 miles, but 22 teams enjoyed a warm, calm morning. The composite team of Peter Main (Redhill CC) and Richard Paine (34th Nomads) was fastest in 58.42. Steve Hursthouse and Luke Evans (Sydenham Wheelers) were the best of the club teams in 1.01.58 and SERC duo Thomas Eichholtz and Matthew Olney finished 4th in 1.03.47.

Fred Brown received 103 entries for the F W Evans Memorial 25. Paul Woodman (Team Clean) set the fastest time with 54.00 for an eventual win, beating his team mate and last year's winner Tim Stevens into 2nd place. The Team Award went to the 34th Nomads team of Richard Payn, David Lyons and Michael Porter. The special prize for 75th place was taken by Janet Budgen (South Western CC).

107 riders entered the Lou Smith Memorial Veteran's 10. Amongst the 69 veteran's who had entered were some classy riders such as Harry Featherstone, Ken Craven - a prolific winner in the 1950s and Paul Bennett, competition record holder at 25 miles in 1951. The morning was perfect and very fast times were recorded. Fastest rider was Robert Pope (Finsbury Park RC) in 19.48. Paul Bennett (Verulam CC) was the fastest vet in 21.08. Ken Craven (Crest CC) won the event on age standard with a plus of 8.34. Sixth placed Peter Abbott teamed with Bill Pink to scoop the team award. Peter's plus of 7.11 gave the club a new age standard record.

The Inter-Club 50 against the Eagle Road Club took place on a slightly different course this year. The 'dreadful drag' up to Royston was now gone, but the 'graveyard' bit from Stumps Cross to the finish was still there. A brisk head wind on the home stretch made the course as hard as ever, but David Steer set the pace and was fastest with a personal best of 2.02.47. Phil Mitchell was 2nd in 2.07.22 and Alan Walker and Peter

Abbott in the next two places completed the winning team with an aggregate time of 8.37.26 and the biggest winning margin in the event ever - 1.15.21!

Steve Marchant set out to defend his WTTA title and to have another crack at the Club 10 record. He managed to do both in good style, posting 5 wins and one second place as qualifying events in the WTTA and so finishing just one point off the possible maximum. After several years of trying, the 10 mile record finally fell. Steve had to travel all the way to Hull, but was very pleased with his 19.54 personal best, becoming the first club rider to break the 30mph barrier. He also set new club records at 25 miles (51.43) and 30 miles (1.05.42) and now holds all the club's solo records. Late in the season he also decided to try his hand at the RTTC National Time Trial Series. Riding in only four of the seven qualifying events, he still managed a very respectable 4th place overall.

David Steer logged Personal Bests of 22.27 and 57.40 before suffering a bad accident in the Redmon CC Hilly 73. A broken nose and many stitches did not stop him from riding the RTTC National 24 Hour Championship finishing with a respectable 403.25 miles in 14th place. He went one better in late August and recorded 424.90 miles in the North Road 24 Hour finishing 3rd overall. Not content with two '24s' David also rode to a respectable 13th place in the RTTC National 12 Hour Championship recording 234.96 miles and finally achieved the club gold standard over 12 hours with 246.83 miles in the Icknield RC 12 Hour.

Peter Abbott was placed in a number of races on Age Standard, setting new Club Veteran Records of +7.11 at 10 miles and +41.40 at 50 miles. He also won the Club Veteran's BAR and the Veteran's BAR in the Southern Counties based on Age Standard at 25, 50 and 100 miles.

At the end of the season, the club's silverware was evenly distributed between David Steer and Peter Abbott. David Steer became the new Club Champion. He also collected the Short Distance Trophy and won the Clubman's competition. Peter Abbott was new Veteran's Champion and took home the Veteran's Short Distance Trophy and the Veteran's Trophy, while Steve Marchant had won the Club Hillclimb Championship.

Looking forward to the 75th Prize Presentation Luncheon as the grand finale of the club's birthday celebrations we can also look back with pride at the club's achievements in the past 75 years. We've seen the club grow from the wishes and aspirations of the men who gathered in 1924 to a well established community of riders and rivals. Over the years we've seen great rides, personal challenges, personal bests and ever improving club records.

It is interesting to note how much (or how little) racing has progressed through the years.

	1925	**1974**	**1999**
10 miles	n/a	22m 26s	19m 54s
25 miles	1h 10m 05s	55m 50s	51m 43s
50 miles	2h 27m 11s	1h 55m 10s	1h 50m 08s
100 miles	5h 25m 35s	4h 09m 40s	3h 58m 22s
12 hours	197.774 miles	254.06 miles	259.794 miles
24 hours	n/a	444.28 miles	467.18 miles

No doubt records will continue to fall in the years to come. No doubt the South Eastern Road Club will continue to grow and prosper. We can look to the future with confidence.

Here's to the next 75 years…!

The author would like to thank all club members who helped with information and additional details, especially Racing Report editor Peter Abbott, without whose collection this history could not have been compiled.

Sue Marchant – December 1999